

**Preliminary  
Colonial Nesting Bird Survey  
on the  
Bureau of Land Management  
Lewistown District: 1995**

A Report to:

Bureau of Land Management

Lewistown District  
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*Submitted by*

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## ABSTRACT

A total of 165 lakes, reservoirs, ponds, and river reaches on 10 USGS quads were surveyed on the Lewistown District of the Bureau of Land Management between 1 June and 18 July 1995.

Surveys of ponds, lakes, or streams were made by 1 or 2 individuals. Each survey took 5-240 person-minutes and consisted of a search of the wetland with binoculars and/or spotting scope for adult birds or nests. If adults were seen, an effort was made to determine 1) numbers present; and 2) breeding status. One Black Tern colony was found on Fifteenmile Lake. At Freezeout Lake, definite breeders included: Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*), Black-necked Stilts (*Himantopus mexicanus*), Franklin's Gulls (*Larus pipixcan*), California Gulls (*Larus californicus*), Common Terns (*Sterna hirundo*), Forster's Terns (*Sterna forsteri*), and Black Terns (*Chlidonias niger*); White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) and Black-crowned Night-Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) were seen and are probably breeding. Historic breeding locations of Black-crowned Night-Herons, Black-necked Stilts, Common Terns, and Black Terns on Lewistown District lands were discovered following the field season, for which reports are contained herein.

The Missouri River was surveyed on June 10-18, 1995 from Fort Benton to Robinson Bridge (148 miles). One Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) colony was found on an island in the Missouri River. Sites identified as potential Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*) breeding sites (Kathy O'Connor, pers. comm) were examined; however, none were suitable at the water levels during the survey (27,000 - 34,000 cfs at Virgelle). In fact, all but one (Wolf Island) was under water. A single island just below Bird rapids appeared possibly suitable for Piping Plovers during the survey.

Additionally, locations of other Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive species observed during the surveys are reported. Species found at these sites include the Spiny Softshell (*Trionyx spiniferus*), Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), Burrowing Owl (*Speotyto cunicularia*), and Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*).

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